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EXTRACT

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TREATISE

By WILLIAM LAW, M. A.

CALLED, *K*

The SPIRIT of PRAYER;

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The Soul rising out of the VANITY of
Time, into the RICHES of *Eternity*.

Discovering the TRUE WAY of turning to GOD;
and of finding the KINGDOM of HEAVEN
the *Riches* of *Eternity* in our Souls.

PHILADELPHIA:

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TH E greatest Part of Mankind, nay of Christians, may be said to be asleep; and that particular Way of Life, which takes up each Man's Mind, Thoughts, and Affections, may very well be called his particular Dream. This Degree of Vanity is equally visible in every Form and Order of Life. The Learned and the Ignorant, the Rich and the Poor, are all in the same State of Slumber; only passing away a short Life in a different Kind of a Dream. But why so? It is because Man has an Eternity within him, is born into this World, not for the Sake of living here, not for any Thing this World can give him, but only to have Time and Place to become either an eternal Partaker of a divine Life with God, or to have an hellish Eternity amongst fallen Angels: And therefore, every Man who has not his Eyes, his Heart, and his Hands, continually governed by this two-fold Eternity, may be justly said to be fast asleep, to have no awakened Sensibility of himself. And a Life devoted to Interest, and the Enjoyments of this World, spent and wasted in the Slavery of earthly Desires, may be truly called a Dream, as

having all the Shortness, Vanity and Delusion of a Dream; only with this Difference, that when a Dream is over, nothing is lost but Fictions and Fancies; but when the Dream of Life is ended only by Death, all that Eternity is lost, for which we were brought into Being. Now there is no Misery in this World, nothing that makes either the Life or Death of Man to be full of Calamity, but this Blindness and Insensibility of his State, into which he so willingly, nay obstinately, plunges himself. Every Thing that has the Nature of Evil and Distress in it, takes its Rise from thence. Do but suppose a Man to know himself; that he comes into this World on no other Errand, but to rise out of the Vanity of Time into the Riches of Eternity; do but suppose him to govern his inward Thoughts and outward Actions by this View of himself, and then to him every Day has lost all its Evil; Prosperity and Adversity have no Difference, because he receives and uses them both in the same Spirit; Life and Death are equally welcome, because equally Parts of his Way to Eternity. For poor and miserable as this Life is, we have all of us free Access to all that is great, and good, and happy; and carry within ourselves a Key to all the Treasures that Heaven has to bestow upon us.—We starve in the Midst of Plenty, groan under Infirmities, with the Remedy in our own Hands; live and die without knowing and feeling any Thing of the one only Good, whilst we have it in our Power to know and enjoy it in as great a Reality, as we know and feel the Power of this World

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over us : For Heaven is as near to our Souls, as this World is to our Bodies ; and we are created, we are redeemed, to have our Conversation in it : God, the only Good of all intelligent Natures, is not an absent or distant God, but is more present in and to our Souls, than our own Bodies ; and we are Strangers to Heaven, and without God in the World, for this only Reason, because we are void of that Spirit of Prayer, which alone can, and never fails to unite us with the one only Good, and to open Heaven and the Kingdom of God within us. All our Salvation consists in the *Manifestation of the Nature, Life, and Spirit of Jesus Christ in our inward new Man.* This alone is Christian Redemption ; this alone delivers from the Guilt and Power of Sin ; this alone redeems, renews, and regains the first Life of God in the Soul of Man. Every Thing besides this is *Self*, is *Fiction*, is *Propriety*, is *own Will*, and however coloured, is only thy *old Man, with all his Deeds.* Enter therefore with all thy Heart into this Truth, let thy Eye be always upon it, do every Thing in View of it, try every Thing by the Truth of it, love Nothing but for the Sake of it. Wherever thou goest, whatever thou dost at Home, or Abroad, in the Field, or at Church, do all in a Desire of Union with Christ, in Imitation of his Tempers and Inclinations, and look upon all as Nothing, but that which exercises and encreases the Spirit and Life of Christ in thy Soul. From Morning to Night keep Jesus in thy Heart, long for Nothing, desire Nothing, hope for Nothing, but to have all that

is within Thee, changed into the Spirit and Temper of the Holy Jesus. Let this be thy *Christianity*, thy *Church*, and thy *Religion*. For this new Birth in Christ thus firmly believed, and continually desired, will do every Thing that thou wantest to have done in Thee, it will dry up all the Springs of Vice, stop all the Workings of Evil in thy Nature, it will bring all that is Good into Thee, it will open all the Gospel within Thee, and thou wilt know what it is to be taught of God. This longing Desire of thy Heart to be *one* with Christ, will soon put a Stop to all the Vanity of thy Life, and nothing will be admitted to enter into thy Heart, or proceed from it, but what comes from God; and returns to God; thou wilt soon be, as it were, tied and bound in the Chains of all holy Affections and Desires, thy *Mouth* will have a *Watch* set upon it, thy *Ears* would willingly hear nothing that does not tend to God, nor thy *Eyes* be open, but to see, and find Occasions of doing Good. In a Word, when this Faith has got both thy *Head* and thy *Heart*, it will then be with thee, as it was with the *Merchant* who found a *Pearl of Great Price*, it will make thee gladly to *sell all that thou hast, and buy it*. For all that had seized and possessed the Heart of any Man, whatever the *Merchant* of this World had got together, whether of Riches, Power, Honour, Learning or Reputation, loses all its Value, is counted but as *Dung*, and willingly parted with, as soon as this glorious Pearl, the new Birth in Christ Jesus, is discovered and found by him. This therefore may serve as
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a *Touchstone*, whereby every one may try the Truth of his State; if the old Man is still a *Merchant* within thee, trading in all Sorts of worldly Honour, Power or Learning, if the Wisdom of this World is not Foolishness to thee, if earthly Interests, and sensual Pleasures, are still the Desire of thy Heart, and only covered under a *Form* of Godliness, a *Cloke* of Creeds, Observances and Institutions of Religion, thou mayst be assured; that the *Pearl of great Price* is not yet found by thee. For where Christ is born, or his Spirit rises up in the Soul; *there all Self* is denied, and obliged to turn out; *there all carnal Wisdom, Arts of Advancement, with every Pride and Glory of this Life, are as so many Heathen Idols*, all willingly renounced, and the Man is not only content, but rejoices to say, that *his Kingdom is not of this World*.

But thou wilt perhaps say, how shall this great Work, the Birth of Christ, be effected in me? It might rather be said, since Christ has an infinite Power, and also an infinite Desire to save Mankind, how can any one miss of this Salvation, but through his *own Unwillingness* to be saved by him? Consider, how was it that the *Lame and Blind, the Lunatick and Leper, the Publican and Sinner*, found Christ to be their Saviour, and to do *all That* for them, which they wanted to be done to them? It was because they had a *real Desire* of having *That* which they asked for, and therefore in true *Faith* and *Prayer* applied to Christ, that his Spirit and Power might enter into them, and heal *That* which they wanted, and desired to be healed in

them. Every one of these said in *Faith and Desire, Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make me whole.* And the Answer was always this, *According to thy Faith, so be it done unto Thee.* This is Christ's Answer *now*, and thus it is done to every one of us at this Day, as *our Faith is, so is it done unto us.* And here lies the whole Reason of our falling short of the Salvation of Christ, it is because we have *no Will* to it.

But you will say, Do not all Christians desire to have Christ to be their Saviour? Yes. But here is the Deceit; all would have Christ to be their Saviour in the *next World*, and to help them into Heaven when they die, by his Power and Merits with God. But this is not *willing* Christ to be thy Saviour; for his Salvation, if it is had, must be had in this World, if He saves Thee, it must be done in this Life, by changing and altering *all that is within Thee*, by helping thee to a new Heart, as he helped the Blind to see, the Lame to walk, and the Dumb to speak. For to have Salvation from Christ, is nothing else but to be made like unto Him; it is to have his Humility and Meekness, his Mortification and Self-denial, his Renunciation of the Spirit, Wisdom, and Honours of this World, his Love of God, his Desire of doing God's Will, and seeking only his Honour. To have these Tempers formed and begotten in thy Heart, is to have Salvation from Christ; but if thou *willest not* to have these Tempers brought forth in thee, if thy Faith and Desire does not seek and cry to Christ for them in the *same Reality*, as the Lame asked to

to walk, and the Blind to see, then thou must be said to be *unwilling* to have Christ to be thy Saviour.

Again, Consider, how was it that the carnal Jew, the deep-read *Scribe*, the learned *Rabbi*, the religious *Pharisee*, not only did not receive, but *crucified* their Saviour? It was because they *willed* and *desired* no such Saviour as He was, no such *inward Salvation* as He offered to them. They desired no Change of their own Nature, no inward Destruction of their own natural Tempers, no Deliverance from the Love of themselves, and the Enjoyments of their Passions; they liked their State, the Gratifications of their old Man, their *long Robes*, their *broad Phylacteries*, and *Greetings* in the Markets. They wanted not to have their *Pride* and *Self-love* dethroned, their Covetousness and Sensuality to be subdued by a new Nature from Heaven derived into them. Their only Desire was the Success of *Judaism*, to have an *outward* Saviour, a *temporal* Prince, that should establish their *Law* and *Ceremonies* over all the Earth. And therefore they crucified their dear Redeemer, and would have none of his Salvation, because it all consisted in a Change of their Nature, in a *new Birth* from above, and a Kingdom of Heaven to be opened *within* them by the Spirit of God.

Oh Christendom, look not only at the *old Jews*, but see thyself in this Glass. For at this Day, (Oh sad Truth to be told!) at this Day, a Christ *within* us, an *inward* Saviour raising a *Birth* of his own Nature, Life, and Spirit within us, is rejected

jected as gross *Enthusiasm*, the learned *Rabbi's* take Counsel against it. The Propagation of *Pope-ry*, the Propagation of *Protestantism*, the Success of some *particular* Church, is the *Salvation* which Priests and People are chiefly concerned about.

But to return: It is manifest, that no one can fail of the Benefit of Christ's Salvation, but through an *Unwillingness* to have it, and from the same Spirit and Tempers which made the *Jews* unwilling to receive it. But if thou wouldst still farther know how this great Work, the *Birth* of Christ, is to be effected in thee, then let this joyful Truth be told thee, that this great Work is *already* begun in every one of us. For this holy Jesus, that is to be formed in thee, that is to be the Saviour and new Life of thy Soul, that is to raise thee out of the Darkness of Death into the Light of Life, and give thee Power to become a Son of God, is already *within* thee, living, stirring, calling, knocking at the Door of thy Heart, and wanting nothing but thy own *Faith* and *good Will*, to have as real a Birth and Form in thee, as he had in the Virgin *Mary*. For the eternal *Word*, or Son of God, did not then first begin to be the Saviour of the World, when he was born in *Bethlehem of Judea*; but that Word which became Man in the Virgin *Mary*, did, from the Beginning of the World, enter as a *Word* of Life, a *Seed* of Salvation, into the first Father of Mankind, was inspoken into him, as an ingrafted Word, under the Name and Character of a *Bruiser of the Serpent's Head*. Hence it is, that Christ said to his Disciples, *the Kingdom*

Kingdom of God is within you; that is, the Divine Nature is within you, given unto your first Father, into the Light of his Life, and from him rising up in the Life of every Son of *Adam*. Hence also the holy Jesus is said to be the *Light, which lighteth every Man that cometh into the World*. Not as he was born in *Bethlehem*, not as He had an human Form upon Earth; in these Respects he could not be said to have been the Light of every Man that cometh into the World; but as he was that *eternal World*, by which all Things were created, which was the *Life and Light* of all Things, and which had as a *second* Creator entered again into fallen Man, as a Bruiser of the Serpent; in this respect it was truly said of our Lord, when on Earth, that *He was that Light which lighteth every Man, that cometh into the World*. For He was really and truly all this, as He was the *Immanuel*, the God *with us*, given unto *Adam*, and in him to all his Offspring. See here the Beginning and glorious Extent of the *Catholic Church* of Christ, it takes in all the World. It is God's unlimited, universal Mercy to all Mankind; and every human Creature, as sure as he is born of *Adam*, has a Birth of the Bruiser of the Serpent within him, and so is infallibly in Covenant with God, through Jesus Christ. Hence also it is, that the Holy Jesus is appointed to be Judge of all the World, it is because all Mankind, all Nations and Languages have in him, and through him, been put into Covenant with God, and made capable of resisting the Evil of their fallen Nature.

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When our blessed Lord conversed with the Woman at *Jacob's Well*, He said unto her, *If thou knewest the Gift of God, and who it is that talketh with Thee, thou wouldest have asked of Him, and he would have given Thee living Water.* How happy (may any one well say) was this Woman of *Samaria*, to stand so near this *Gift of God*, from whom she might have had living Water, had she but vouchsafed to have asked for it! But, dear Christian, this Happiness is thine; for this Holy Jesus, *the Gift of God*, first given unto *Adam*, and in him to all that are descended from him, is the *Gift of God* to Thee, as sure as thou art born of *Adam*; nay, hast thou never yet owned him; art thou wandered from him, as far as the Prodigal Son from his Father's House? Yet is he still with Thee, he is the Gift of God to Thee, and if thou wilt turn to Him, and ask of Him, he has living Water for Thee.

Poor Sinner! consider the Treasure thou hast within Thee, the Saviour of the World, the eternal Word of God lies hid in Thee, as a Spark of the Divine Nature, which is to overcome Sin and Death, and Hell within Thee, and generate the Life of Heaven again in thy Soul. Turn to thy Heart, and thy Heart will find its Saviour, its God within itself. Thou seest, hearst, and feelest nothing of God, because thou seekest for Him *abroad* with thy outward Eyes, thou seekest for him in Books, in Controversies, in the Church, and outward Exercises, but *there* thou wilt not find Him, till thou hast *first* found Him in thy Heart. Seek for Him in thy Heart,

Heart, and thou wilt never seek in vain, for there he dwelleth, there is the Seat of his Light and Holy Spirit.

For this turning to the Light and Spirit of God within Thee, is thy *only true* turning unto God, there is no other Way of finding Him, but in that Place where he dwelleth in Thee. For though God be every where present, yet He is only present to Thee in the deepest, and most central Part of thy Soul. Thy natural *Senses* cannot possess God, or unite Thee to him, nay thy inward Faculties of *Understanding*, *Will*, and *Memory*, can only reach after God, but cannot be the *Place* of his Habitation in Thee. But there is a *Root*, or *Death* in Thee, from whence all these Faculties come forth, as Lines from a *Center*, or as Branches from the Body of the Tree. This Depth is called the *Center*, the *Fund*, or *Bottom* of the Soul. This Depth is the *Unity*, the *Eternity*, I had almost said, the *Infinity* of thy Soul; for it is so infinite, that nothing can satisfy it, or give it any Rest, but the Infinity of God. In this *Depth* of the Soul, the Holy Trinity brought forth its own living Image in the first created Man, bearing in Himself a living Representation of Father, Son and Holy Ghost, and this was his Dwelling in God, and God in Him. This was the Kingdom of God *within* Him, and made Paradise *without* Him. But the Day that *Adam* did eat of the forbidden earthly Tree, in that Day he absolutely died to this Kingdom of God *within* Him. This Depth, or *Center* of his Soul having lost its God, was shut up in Death
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and Darkness, and became a Prisoner in an earthly Animal, that only excelled its Brethren, the Beasts, in an upright Form, and serpentine Subtlety. Thus ended the Fall of Man. But from that Moment that the God of Mercy inspoke into *Adam* the Bruiser of the Serpent, from that Moment all the Riches and Treasures of the Divine Nature came again into Man, as a *Seed* of Salvation sown into the *Center* of the Soul, and only lieth hidden there in every Man, till he desires to rise from his fallen State, and to be born again from above.

Awake then, thou that sleepest, and Christ, who, from all Eternity, hath been espoused to thy Soul, shall give Thee Light. Begin to Search and dig in thine own Field for this *Pearl of Eternity*, that lieth hidden in it; it cannot cost Thee too much, nor canst thou buy it dear; for it is *All*, and when thou hast found it, thou wilt know, that all which thou hast sold, or given away for it, is as meer a Nothing, as a Bubble upon the Water.

But if thou turnest from this heavenly Pearl, or tramplest it under thy Feet, for the Sake of being Rich or Great, either in Church or State, if Death finds Thee in *this Success*, thou canst not then say, that though the *Pearl* is lost, yet *something* has been gained instead of it. For in that parting Moment, the *Things*, and the *Sounds* of this World, will be exactly alike; to have had an *Estate*, or only to have *heard* of it; to have lived at *Lambeth* twenty Years, or only to have

twenty

twenty Times *passed by* the Palace, will be the *same Good*, or the *same Nothing* to Thee.

But I will now shew a little more distinctly, what this *Pearl of Eternity* is. *First*, It is the *Light* and *Spirit* of God within Thee, which has hitherto done Thee but little Good, because all the Desire of thy Heart has been after the *Light* and *Spirit* of this World. Thy Reason and Senses, thy Heart and Passions, have turned all their Attention to the poor Concerns of this Life, and therefore thou art a Stranger to this Principle of Heaven, this Riches of Eternity within Thee. For as God is not, cannot be truly found by any Worshippers, but those who worship Him in *Spirit* and in *Truth*, so this *Light* and *Spirit*, though always within us, is not, cannot be found, felt, or enjoyed, but by those, whose whole Spirit is turned to it.

When Man first came into Being, and stood before God as his own Image and Likeness, this *Light* and *Spirit* of God was as *natural* to him, as truly the *Light* of his Nature, as the *Light* and *Air* of this World is natural to the Creatures that have their Birth in it. But when Man, not content with the Food of Eternity, did eat of the earthly Tree, this *Light* and *Spirit* of Heaven was no more *natural* to him, no more rose up as a Birth of his Nature, but, instead thereof, he was left solely to the *Light* and *Spirit* of this World. And this is *that Death* which God told *Adam* he should surely die, in the Day that he should eat of the forbidden Tree.

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But the Goodness of God would not leave Man in this Condition ; a Redemption from it was immediately granted, and the Bruiser of the Serpent brought the Light and Spirit of Heaven *once more* into the human Nature. Not as it was in its first Ståte, when Man was in Paradise, but as a *Treasure hidden* in the Center of our Souls, which should discover, and open itself by Degrees, in such Proportion, as the *Faith* and *Desires* of our Hearts were turned to it. This Light and Spirit of God thus freely restored again to the Soul, and lying in it as a *secret Source* of Heaven, is called *Grace*, *Free Grace*, or the *Supernatural* Gift, or Power of God in the Soul, because it was something, that the Neutral Powers of the Soul could no more obtain. Hence it is, that in the greatest Truth, and highest Reality, every *Stirring* of the Soul, every *Tendency* of the Heart towards God and Goodness, is *justly* and *necessarily* ascribed to the *Holy Spirit*, or the *Grace* of God. It is because this *first Seed* of Life, which is sown into the Soul, as the *Gift* or *Grace* of God to fallen Man, is itself the *Light* and *Spirit* of God, and therefore every *Stirring*, or *Opening* of this Seed of Life, every awakened Thought or Desire that arises from it, must be called the *Moving*, or the *Quickening* of the Spirit of God ; and therefore that new Man which arises from it, must, of all Necessity, be said to be *solely the Work and Operation* of God. Hence also we have an easy and plain Declaration of the true Meaning, solid Sense, and certain Truth, of all those Scriptures, which speak of the *Inspira-*
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tion of God, the Operation of the *Holy Spirit*, the Power of the *Divine Light*, as the *sole* and *necessary* Agents in the Renewal and Sanctification of our Souls, and also as being Things *common* to all Men. It is because this *Seed* of Life, or Bruiser of the Serpent, is *common* to all Men, and has in all Men a *Degree* of Life, which is in itself so much of the *Inspiration*, or Life of God, the *Spirit* of God, the *Light* of God, which is in every Soul, and is its Power of becoming born again of God. Hence also it is, that all Men are exhorted not to *quench*, or *resist*, or *grieve* the Spirit; that is, this *Seed of the Spirit and Light of God* that is in *all* Men, as the only Source of Good. Again, *the Flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the Flesh*. By the *Flesh*, and its Lustings, are meant the *mere human Nature*, or the *natural Man*, as He is by the Fall; by the *Spirit* is meant the *Bruiser of the Serpent*, that *Seed of the Light and Spirit of God*, which lieth as a Treasure hid in the Soul, in order to bring forth the Life that was lost in *Adam*. Now as the *Flesh* hath its Life, its Lustings, whence all Sorts of Evil are truly said to be inspired, quickened, and stirred up in us; so the Spirit being a *Living Principle within us*, has its *Inspiration*, its *Breathing*, its *Moving*, its *Quickening*, from which alone the *Divine Life*, or the Angel that died in *Adam*, can be born in us.

When this *Seed of the Spirit*, *common* to all Men, is not resisted, grieved and quenched, but its *Inspirations* and *Motions* suffered to grow and increase in us, to unite with God, and get Power

over all the Lusts of the Flesh, then we are born again, the Nature, Spirit and Tempers of Jesus Christ are opened in our Souls, the Kingdom of God is come, and is found within us. On the other Hand, when the Flesh, or the *Natural* Man hath resisted and quenched this Spirit or Seed of Life within us, then the Works of the Flesh, Adultery, Fornication, Murders, Lying, Hatred, Envy, Wrath, Pride, Foolishness, worldly Wisdom, carnal Prudence, false Religion, hypocritical Holiness, and serpentine Subtlety, have set up their Kingdom within us.

See here in short the State of Man as redeemed. He has a *Spark* of the Light and Spirit of God, as a *Supernatural Gift* of God given into the Birth of his Soul, to bring forth by Degrees a *New Birth* of that Life, which was lost in Paradise. This Holy Spark of the Divine Nature within Him, has a natural, strong, and almost infinite Tendency, or Reaching after that eternal Light and Spirit of God, from whence it came forth. It came forth from God, it came out of God, it *partaketh* of the Divine Nature, and therefore it is always in a State of Tendency and Return to God. And all this is called the *Breathing*, the *Moving*, the *Quickening* of the Holy Spirit within us, which are so many Operations of this Spark of Life tending towards God. On the other Hand, The Deity, as considered in itself, and *without* the Soul of Man, has an *infinite, unchangeable* Tendency of Love, and Desire towards the Soul of Man, to unite, and communicate its own Riches and Glories to it, just as the

the Spirit of the *Air without* Man, unites, and communicates its Riches and Virtues to the Spirit of the Air that is *within* Man. This Love, or Desire of God towards the Soul of Man is so great, that He gave His only begotten Son, the Brightness of his Glory, to take human Nature upon Him, in its fallen State, that by this mysterious Union of God and Man, all the Enemies of the Soul of Man might be overcome, and every human Creature might have a Power of being born again according to that Image of God, in which he was first created. The Gospel is the History of this Love of God to Man. Inwardly he has a *Seed* of the Divine Life given into the Birth of his Soul, a Seed that has all the *Riches of Eternity* in it, and is always wanting to come to the Birth in him, and be alive in God. Outwardly he has Jesus Christ, who, as a *Sun* of Righteousness, is always casting forth his enlivening Beams on this *inward Seed*, to kindle and call it forth to the Birth, doing that to this Seed of Heaven in Man, which the Sun in the Firmament is always doing to the vegetable Seeds in the Earth.

Consider this Matter in the following Similitude. A *Grain* of Wheat has the *Air* and *Light* of this World inclosed, or incorporated in it: This is the Mystery of its Life, this is its Power of Growing, by this it has a strong continual Tendency of uniting again with that *Ocean* of Light and Air, from whence it came forth, and so it helps to kindle its own vegetable Life.

On the other Hand, That great *Ocean* of Light and Air, having its own *Offspring* hidden in the Heart of the Grain, has a perpetual strong Tendency to unite and communicate with it again. From this Desire of Union on *both Sides*, the vegetable Life arises, and all the Virtues and Powers contained in it.

But here let it be well observed, that this Desire on both Sides cannot have its Effect, till the *Husk* and gross Part of the Grain falls into a State of Corruption and Death, till this begins, the Mystery of Life hidden in it, cannot come forth. The Application here may be left to the Reader. I shall only observe, that we may here see the true Ground, and absolute Necessity of that dying to ourselves, and to the World, to which our Blessed Lord so constantly calls all his Followers. An universal Self-denial, a perpetual Mortification of the Lust of the Flesh, the Lust of the Eyes, and the Pride of Life, is not a Thing imposed upon us by the *mere Will* of God, is not required as a *Punishment*, is not an Invention of dull and *monkish* Spirits, but has its *Ground* and *Reason* in the Nature of the Thing, and is as absolutely necessary to make Way for the New Birth, as the Death of the *Husk*, and gross Part of the Grain, is necessary to make Way for its vegetable Life.

But *Secondly*, this *Pearl of Eternity* is the *Wisdom* and *Love* of God within Thee. In this Pearl of thy Serpent Bruiser, all the Holy Nature, Spirit, Tempers, and Inclinations of Christ lie as in a Seed, in the Center of thy Soul, and
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divine Wisdom, and heavenly Love, will grow up in Thee, if thou givest but true Attention to God present in thy Soul. On the other Hand, there is hidden also in the Depth of thy Nature, the *Root*, or *Possibility* of all the hellish Nature, Spirit and Tempers of the fallen Angels. For Heaven and Hell have each of them their *Foundation* within us, they come not into us from *without*, but spring up in us, according as our *Will* and *Heart* is turned either to the Light of God, or the Kingdom of Darkness. But when this Life, which is in the Midst of these two Eternities, is at an End, either an Angel or a Devil will be found to have a *Birth* in us.

Thou needest not therefore run here, or there, saying, *Where is Christ?* Thou needest not say, *who shall ascend into Heaven, that is, to bring down Christ from above?* or who shall descend into the Deep, to bring up Christ from the Dead? for behold the *Word*, which is the Wisdom of God, is in thy Heart, it is there as a Bruiser of thy Serpent, as a Light unto thy Feet, and Lanthorn unto thy Paths. It is there as an *Holy Oil*, to soften and overcome the wrathful fiery Properties of thy Nature, and change them into the humble Meekness of Light and Love. It is there as a *speaking Word* of God in thy Soul; and as soon as thou art ready to hear, this eternal speaking Word will speak Wisdom and Love in thy inward Parts, and bring forth the Birth of Christ, with all his Holy Nature, Spirit and Tempers, within Thee. Hence it was (that is, from this Principle of Heaven, or Christ in the

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Soul) hence I say it was, that so many eminent Spirits, Partakers of a divine Life, have appeared in so many Parts of the Heathen World. Glorious Names, Sons of Wisdom, that shone, as Lights hung out by God, in the Midst of idolatrous Darkeness. These were the Apostles of a Christ *within*, that were awakened and commissioned by the *inward Bruiser* of the Serpent, to call Mankind from the blind Pursuits of Flesh and Blood, to know themselves, the Dignity of their Nature, the Immortality of their Souls, and the Necessity of Virtue, to avoid eternal Shame and Misery. These *Apostles*, though they had not the *Law*, or *written Gospel*, to urge upon their Hearers, yet, having turned to God, they found and preached the Gospel, that was written in their Hearts. Hence one of them could say this Divine Truth, *viz. that such only are Priests and Prophets, who have God in themselves.* Hence also it is, that in the Christian Church, there hath been in all Ages, amongst the most illiterate, both Men and Women, who have attained to a deep Understanding of the Mysteries of the Wisdom and Love of God, in Christ Jesus. And what Wonder? since it is not Art or Science, or Skill in Grammar or Logic, but the Opening of the Divine Life in the Soul, that can give true Understanding of the Things of God. This Life of God in the Soul, which for its Smallness at first, and Capacity for great Growth, is, by our Lord, compared to a Grain of Mustard Seed, may be, and too generally is, suppressed, and kept under, either by worldly Cares, or Pleasures,

fures, by vain Learning, Sensuality, or Ambition. And all this while, whatever Church or Profession any Man is of, he is a mere *Natural Man*, *unregenerate*, *unenlightened* by the Spirit of God, because this Seed of Heaven is choak'd, and not suffered to grow up in him. And therefore his *Religion* is no more from Heaven, than his *fine Breeding*; his *Cares* have no more Goodness in them, than his *Pleasures*; his *Love* is worth no more than his *Hatred*; his Zeal for this, or against that Form of Religion, has only the Nature of any other worldly Contention in it. And thus it is, and must be with every mere natural Man; whatever Appearances he may put on, he may, if he pleases, know himself to be the Slave and Machine of his own corrupt Tempers and Inclinations; to be enlightened, inspired, quickened and animated by Self-love, Self-esteem, and Self-seeking, which is the only Life, and Spirit of the meer natural Man, whether he be *Heathen*, *Jew* or *Christian*.

On the other Hand, wherever this Seed of Heaven is suffered to take Root, to get Life and Breath in the Soul, whether it be in Man or Woman, young or old, there this new born inward Man is justly said to be *inspired*, *enlightened* and *moved* by the Spirit of God, because his whole Birth and Life is a Birth from above, of the Light and Spirit of God, and therefore all that is in him, hath the Nature, Spirit and Tempers of Heaven in it. As this regenerate Life grows up in any Man, so there grows up a true and real Knowledge of the whole Mystery of

Godliness in himself. All that the Gospel teaches of Sin and Grace, of Life and Death, of Heaven and Hell, of the New and Old Man, of the Light and Spirit of God, are Things not got by *Hearsay*, but inwardly known, felt and experienced, in the Growth of his own new born Life. He has then an *Unction* from above, which teacheth him all Things, a Spirit that *knoweth what it ought to pray for*, a Spirit that *prays without ceasing*, that is risen with Christ from the Dead, and has all its Conversation in Heaven; a Spirit that hath *Groans and Sighs that cannot be uttered*, that travaileth and groaneth with the whole Creation, to be delivered from Vanity, and have its glorious Liberty in that God, from whom it came forth.

Again, *Thirdly*, this *Pearl of Eternity* is the *Church*, or *Temple of God within Thee*, the consecrated Place of Divine Worship, where alone thou canst worship God in *Spirit, and in Truth*. *In Spirit*, because thy Spirit is that alone in Thee, which can unite, and cleave unto God, and receive the Workings of his Divine Spirit upon Thee. *In Truth*, because this *Adoration* in Spirit, is that *Truth and Reality*, of which all outward *Forms and Rites*, though instituted by God, are only the *Figure* for a Time, but this Worship is Eternal. Accustom thyself to the Holy Service of this inward Temple. In the Midst of it, is the Fountain of Living Water, of which thou mayst drink, and live for ever. There the Mysteries of thy Redemption are celebrated, or rather opened in Life and Power. There the Supper
of

of the Lamb is kept; the *Bread that came down from Heaven, that giveth Life to the World*, is thy true Nourishment: All is done, and known in real Experience, in a living Sensibility of the Work of God on the Soul. There the Birth, the Life, the Sufferings, the Death, the Resurrection and Ascension of Christ, are not merely remembered, but inwardly found and enjoyed, as the real States of thy Soul, which has followed Christ in the Regeneration. When once thou art well grounded in this *inward Worship*, thou wilt have learnt to live unto God *above Time and Place*. For every Day will be *Sunday* to thee, and wherever thou goest, thou wilt have a *Priest*, a *Church*, and an *Altar* along with Thee. For when God has all that he should have of thy Heart, when renouncing the Will, Judgment, Tempers and Inclinations of thy *old Man*, thou art wholly given up to the Obedience of the Light and Spirit of God within Thee, to *Will* only in his Will, to *Love* only in his Love, to be *Wise* only in his Wisdom, then it is, that every Thing thou doest, is as a Song of Praise, and the common Business of thy Life is a conforming to God's Will on Earth, as Angels do in Heaven.

Fourthly, and lastly, This *Pearl of Eternity* is the *Peace and Joy* of God within Thee, but can only be found by the Manifestation of the Life and Power of Jesus Christ in thy Soul. But Christ cannot be thy Power and thy Life, till, in Obedience to his Call, *thou deniest thyself, takest up thy daily Cross, and followest Him* in the Regeneration. This is peremptory, it admits of no Reserve,

Reserve, or Evasion, it is the one Way to Christ and eternal Life. But be where thou wilt, either *here*, or at *Rome*, or *Geneva*, if *Self* is undenied, if thou livest to thine *own Will*, to the Pleasures of thy natural Lust and Appetites, Senses and Passions, and in Conformity to the vain Customs and Spirit of this World, thou art dead whilst thou livest, the Seed of the Woman is crucified within Thee, Christ can profit thee Nothing, thou art a Stranger to all that is holy and heavenly within Thee, and utterly incapable of finding the *Peace* and *Joy* of God in thy Soul. And thus thou art *Poor*, and *Blind*, and *Naked*, and *Empty*, and livest a miserable Life in the Vanity of Time ; whilst all the Riches of Eternity, the Light and Spirit, the Wisdom and Love, the Peace and Joy of God, are within Thee. And thus it will always be with Thee, there is no Remedy, go where thou wilt, do what thou wilt, all is shut up, there is no open Door of Salvation, no Awakeniſg out of the Sleep of Sin, no Deliverance from the Power of thy corrupt Nature, no overcoming of the World, no Revelation of Jesus Christ, no Joy of the New Birth from above, till dying to thyself and the World, thou turnest to the Light and Spirit, and Power of God in thy Soul. All is fruitless and insignificant, all the Means of thy Redemption are at a Stand, all outward Forms are but a dead Formality, till this Fountain of Living Water is found within Thee.

But thou wilt perhaps say, How shall I discover this Riches of Eternity, this Light, and Spirit,

rit, and Wisdom, and Peace of God, treasured
 up within me? Thy *first Thought* of Repentance,
 or *Desire* of turning to God, is thy *first Discover-*
ry of this Light and Spirit of God within Thee.
 It is the Voice and Language of the *Word* of
 God within Thee, though thou knowest it not.
 It is the Bruiser of thy Serpent's Head, thy dear
Immanuel, who is beginning to preach *within*
 Thee, that same which He first preached in
 publick, saying, *Repent, for the Kingdom of Hea-*
ven is at Hand. When therefore but the smal-
 lest Instinct or Desire of thy Heart calleth Thee
 towards God, and a Newness of Life, give it
 Time and Leave to speak; and take Care thou
 refuse not Him that speaketh. For it is not an
 Angel from Heaven that speaketh to Thee, but
 it is the eternal *speaking Word* of God in thy
 Heart, that Word which at first created Thee, is
 thus beginning to create Thee a *second Time* un-
 to Righteousness, that a new Man may be form-
 ed again in Thee in the Image and Likeness of
 God. But above all Things, beware of taking
 this *Desire* of Repentance to be the Effect of
 thy own natural *Sense* and *Reason*, for in so doing
 thou loosest the *Key* of all the Heavenly Treasure
 that is in Thee, thou shuttest the Door against
 God, turnest away from Him, and thy Repent-
 ance (if thou hast any) will be only a vain, un-
 profitable Work of thy own Hands, that will do
 Thee no more Good, than a *Well* that is without
 Water. But if thou takest this *awakened Desire*
 of turning to God to be, as in Truth it is, the
 coming of Christ in thy Soul, the *Working, Re-*
deeming

deeming Power of the Light and Spirit of the Holy Jesus within Thee, if thou dost reverence and adhere to it as such, this *Faith will save Thee, will make Thee whole*; and by thus believing in Christ, though thou wert dead, yet shalt thou live.

Now all dependeth upon thy right Submission and Obedience to this speaking of God in thy Soul. Stop therefore all Self-activity, listen not to the Suggestions of thy own Reason, run not on in thy own Will, but be retired, silent, passive, and humbly attentive to this new risen Light within Thee. Open thy Heart, thy Eyes, and Ears to all its Impressions. Let it enlighten, teach, frighten, torment, judge, and condemn Thee, as it pleaseth, turn not away from it, hear all it saith, seek for no Relief out of it, consult not with Flesh and Blood, but with a Heart full of Faith and Resignation to God, pray only this Prayer, that God's Kingdom may come, and his Will be done in thy Soul. Stand faithfully in this State of Preparation, thus given up to the Spirit of God, and then the Work of thy Repentance will be wrought in God, and thou wilt soon find, that He that is in Thee, is much greater than all that are against Thee.

But that thou mayest do all this the better, and be more firmly assured, that this *Resignation* to, and *Dependence* upon the working of God's Spirit within Thee, is right and sound, I shall lay before Thee two great, and infallible, and fundamental Truths, which will be as a Rock for thy Faith to stand upon.

First,

First, That through all the whole Nature of Things, nothing can *do*, or *be* a real Good to thy Soul, but the *Operation of God* upon it. *Secondly*, That all the Dispensations of God to Mankind, from the Fall of *Adam*, to the Preaching of the Gospel, were only for this *one End*, to fit, prepare, and dispose the Soul for the *Operation* of the Spirit of God upon it. These two great Truths, well and deeply apprehended, put the Soul in its right State, in a continual Dependence upon God, in a Readiness to receive all Good from Him, and will be a continual Source of Light in thy Mind. They will keep Thee safe from all Errors, and false Zeal in Things, and Forms of Religion, from a Sectarian Spirit, from Bigotry and Superstition; they will teach Thee the true Difference between the Means and End of Religion, and the Regard thou shewest to the *Shell*, will be only so far as the *Kernel* is to be found in it.

Man, by his Fall, had broke off from his true *Center*, his proper Place in God, and therefore the Life and Operation of God was no more in Him. He was fallen from a Life in God, into a Life of *Self*, into an animal Life of Self-love, Self-esteem, and Self-seeking in the poor perishing Enjoyments of this World. This was the *Natural State* of Man by the Fall. He was an Apostate from God, and his natural Life was all Idolatry, where *Self* was the great Idol that was worshipped instead of God. See here the whole Truth in short. All Sin, Death, Damnation and Hell, is nothing else but this Kingdom of *Self*,
or

or the various Operations of Self-love, Self-esteem, and Self-seeking, which separate the Soul from God, and end in eternal Death and Hell.

On the other Hand, all that is *Grace, Redemption, Salvation, Sanctification, Spiritual Life*, and the *New-Birth*, is nothing else but so much of the Life and Operation of God found again in the Soul. It is Man come back again into his *Center*, or *Place* in God, from whence he had broke off. The Beginning again of the Life of God in the Soul, was then first made, when the Mercy of God inspoke into *Adam* a *Seed* of the Divine Life, which should bruise the Head of the Serpent, which had wrought itself into the human Nature. Here the Kingdom of God was again within us, though only as a *Seed*, yet small as it was, it was yet a *Degree* of the divine Life, which, if rightly cultivated, would overcome all the Evil that was in us, and make of every fallen Man, a new born Son of God.

All the Sacrifices, and Institutions of the ancient Patriarchs, the *Law* of *Moses*, with all its Types, and Rites, and Ceremonies, had this *only End*; they were the Methods of Divine Wisdom for a Time, to keep the Hearts of Men from the Wanderings of Idolatry, in a State of *Holy Expectation* upon God; they were to keep the *first Seed* of Life in a State of Growth, and make Way for the farther Operation of God upon the Soul; or, as the Apostle speaks, to be as a *Schoolmaster* unto *Christ*. That is, till the Birth, the Death, the Resurrection and Ascension of Christ, should conquer Death, and Hell,
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open a new Dispensation of God, and baptize Mankind afresh with the Holy Ghost, and Fire of Heaven. Then, that is, on the Day of *Pentecost*, a new Dispensation of God came forth ; which, on God's Part, was the Operation of the Holy Spirit in Gifts and Graces upon the whole Church. And on Man's Part, it was the Adoration of God in *Spirit* and in *Truth*. Thus all that was done by God, from the Bruiser of the Serpent given to *Adam*, to Christ's sitting down on the right Hand of God, was all for this End, to remove all that stood between God and Man, and to make Way for the immediate and continual Operation of God upon the Soul. And that Man, baptized with the Holy Spirit, and born again from Above, should absolutely renounce *Self*, and wholly give up his Soul to the Operation of God's Spirit, to know, to love, to will, to pray, to worship, to preach, to exhort, to use all the Faculties of his Mind, and all the outward Things of this World, as enlightened, inspired, moved and guided by the Holy Ghost ; who, by this last Dispensation of God, was given to be a Comforter, a Teacher, and Guide to the Church, who should abide with it for ever.

This is Christianity, a spiritual Society, not because it has no worldly Concerns, but because all its Members, as such, are born of the Spirit, kept alive, animated and governed by the Spirit of God. It is constantly called, by our Lord, the Kingdom of God, or Heaven, because all its *Ministry* and *Service*, all that is done in it, is done

done in Obedience and Subjection to *that Spirit*, by which Angels live, and are governed in Heaven. Hence our blessed Lord taught his Disciples to pray, that this Kingdom might come, that so God's Will might be done on Earth, as it is in Heaven, which could not be but by that same Spirit by which it is done in Heaven. The short is this: The Kingdom of *Self*, is the Fall of Man, or the great Apostacy from the Life of God in the Soul, and every one, wherever he be, that liveth unto *Self*, is still under the Fall and great Apostacy from God. The Kingdom of Christ is the Spirit and Power of God, dwelling and manifesting itself in the Birth of a new inward Man: And no one is a Member of this Kingdom, but *so far* as a true Birth of the Spirit is brought forth in him. These two Kingdoms take in all Mankind, he that is not of one, is certainly in the other; dying to one, is living to the other.

Hence we may gather these following Truths: *First*, Here is shewn the true Ground and Reason of what was said above, namely, That when the *Call* of God to Repentance first ariseth in thy Soul, thou art to be *retired, silent, passive*, and humbly attentive to this new risen Light within thee, by wholly stopping, or disregarding the Workings of thy own Will, Reason and Judgment. It is because all these are false Counselors, the sworn Servants, bribed Slaves of thy fallen Nature, they are all born and bred in the Kingdom of *Self*; and therefore if a new Kingdom is to be set up in Thee, if the Operation of
God

God is to have its Effect in Thee; all these natural Powers of *Self* are to be silenced and suppressed, till they have learned Obedience and Subjection to the Spirit of God. Now this is not requiring thee to become a *Fool*, or to give up thy Claim to Sense and Reason, but is the shortest Way to have thy Sense and Reason delivered from Folly, and thy whole rational Nature strengthened, enlightened, and guided by that Light, which is Wisdom itself.

A Child that obediently denies his own Will, and own Reason, to be guided by the Will and Reason of a truly wise and understanding Tutor, cannot be said to make himself a Fool, and give up the Benefit of his rational Nature, but to have taken the shortest Way to have his own Will and Reason made truly a Blessing to him.

Secondly, Hence is to be seen the true Ground and Necessity of that universal Mortification and Self-denial with regard to all our Senses, Appetites, Tempers, Passions and Judgments. It is because all our whole Nature, as fallen from the Life of God, is in a State of Contrariety to the Order and End of our Creation, a continual Source of disorderly Appetites, corrupt Tempers, and false Judgments. And therefore every Motion of it is to be mortified, changed and purified from its *natural State*, before we can enter into the Kingdom of God. Thus when our Lord saith, *Except a Man hateth his Father and Mother, yea, and his own Life, he cannot be my Disciple*; it is because our best Tempers are yet *carnal*, and full of the *Imperfections* of our fallen Nature. The

Doctrine is just and good : Not as if *Father* and *Mother* were to be hated ; but *that Love*, which an unregenerate Person, or *natural Man*, hath towards them, is to be *hated* ; as being a blind *Self-love*, full of all the *Weakness* and *Partialty*, with which fallen Man loves, honours, esteems and cleaves to himself. This Love, *born* from corrupt Flesh and Blood, and *polluted* with Self, is to be *hated* and *parted* with, that we may love them with a Love *born* of God, with such a Love, and on such a Motive, as Christ hath loved us. And then the *Disciple* of Christ far exceeds all others in the Love of Parents. Again, our *own Life* is to be *hated* ; and the Reason is plain, it is because there is nothing lovely in it. It is a *Legion* of Evil, a monstrous Birth of the *Serpent*, the *World*, and the *Flesh* ; it is an *Apostacy* from the *Life* and *Power* of God in the Soul ; a Life that is *Death* to Heaven, that is pure unmixed *Idolatry*, that lives wholly to *Self*, and not to God, and therefore *all this own Life* is to be absolutely *hated*, all this Self is to be *denied* and *mortified*, if the Nature, Spirit, Tempers and Inclinations of Christ are to be brought to Life in us. For it is as impossible to live to both these Lives at once, as for a *Body* to move two contrary Ways at the same Time. And therefore all these Mortifications and Self-denials have an absolute Necessity in the Nature of the Thing itself.

Thus when our Lord further saith, unless a Man forsake *all that he hath*, *he cannot be my Disciple*. The Reason is plain, and the Necessity absolute ; it is because *all that the natural Man hath*, is in the Possession

Possession of *Self-love*, and therefore *this Possession* is to be absolutely *forsaken*, and parted with. All that he hath, is to be put into other Hands, to be given to divine Love, or this *natural Man* cannot be changed into a *Disciple* of Christ. For *Self-love* in *all that it hath*, is earthly, sensual and devilish, and therefore must have *all* taken away from it; and then to the *natural Man* *all* is lost, he hath *nothing* left, all is laid down at the Feet of Jesus. And then all Things are common, as soon as *Self-love* has lost the Possession of them. And then the *Disciple* of Christ, *though having nothing, yet possesseth all Things*; all that the *natural Man* hath *forsaken*, is restored to the *Disciple* of Christ an *Hundred-fold*. For *Self-love*, the greatest of all *Thieves*, being now cast out, and all that he had stolen and hidden, thus taken from him, and put into the Hands of divine Love, every *Mite* becometh a large Treasure, and *Mammon* openeth the Door into everlasting Habitations. This was the Spirit of the *first Draught* of a Christian Church at *Jerusalem*, a Church made truly after the Pattern of Heaven, where the Love that reigns in Heaven reigned in it, where divine Love broke down all the selfish Fences, the Locks and Bolts of *me, mine, my own, &c.* and laid all Things common to the Members of this new Kingdom of God on Earth.

Now though many Years did not pass after the Age of the Apostles, before *Satan* and *Self* got Footing in the Church, and set up Merchandize in the House of God; yet this *one Heart*, and *one Spirit*, which then first appeared in the *Jeru-*

salem Church, is that *one Heart* and *Spirit* of divine Love, to which *all* are called, that would be true Disciples of Christ. And though the Practice of it is lost as to the Church in general, yet it ought not to have been lost; and therefore every Christian ought to make it his great Care, and Prayer, to have it restored in himself. And then, though born in the Dregs of Time, or living in *Babylon*, he will be as truly a Member of the first heavenly Church at *Jerusalem*, as if he had lived in it in the Days of the Apostles. This Spirit of Love, born of that celestial Fire, with which Christ baptizes his true Disciples, is alone that Spirit, which can enter into Heaven, and therefore is that Spirit which is to be born in us, whilst we are on Earth. For no one can enter into Heaven, till he is made heavenly, till the Spirit of Heaven is entered into him. And therefore all that our Lord hath said of denying and dying to *Self*, and of his parting with all that he hath, are Practices absolutely necessary from the Nature of the Thing.

Because all turning to Self, is so far turning from God, and so much as we have of Self-love, so much we have of a hellish, earthly Weight, that must be taken off, or there can be no Ascension into Heaven. But thou wilt perhaps say, if *all Self-love* is to be renounced, then all Love of our Neighbour is renounced along with it, because the Commandment is, *only to love our Neighbour as ourselves*. The Answer here is easy, and yet no Quarter given to Self-love. There is but *one only* Love in Heaven, and yet the Angels
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of God love one another in the *same Manner* as they love themselves. The Matter is thus ; the one supreme, unchangeable *Rule* of Love, which is a *Law* to all intelligent Beings of all Worlds, and will be a Law to all Eternity, is this, *viz.* *That God alone is to be loved for Himself, and all other Beings only in Him, and for Him.* Whatever intelligent Creature lives not under this Rule of Love, is so far fallen from the Order of his Creation, and is, till He returns to this eternal Law of Love, an *Apostate* from God, and incapable of the Kingdom of Heaven.

Now if God alone is to be loved for *Himself*, then no Creature is to be loved for *itself* ; and so all *Self-love* in every Creature is absolutely condemned.

And if all created Beings are only to be loved *in* and *for* God, then my Neighbour is to be loved *as* I love myself, and I am only to love myself, as I love my Neighbour, or any other created Being, that is, only *in* and *for* God. And thus the Command of loving our Neighbour as ourselves, stands firm, and yet all Self-love is plucked up by the Roots. But what is loving any Creature, only *in*, and *for*, God ? It is when we love it only, as it is God's *Work, Image* and *Delight* ; when we love it merely as it is God's, and belongs to Him, this is loving it *in* God, and when all that we wish, intend, or do to it, is done from a Love of God, for the Honour of God, and in Conformity to the Will of God, this is loving it *for* God. This is the *one Love* that is, and must be the Spirit of all Creatures,

that live united to God. Now this is no speculative Refinement or fine-spun Fiction of the Brain, but the simple Truth, a first Law of Nature, and a necessary Band of Union between God and the Creature. The Creature is not in God, is a Stranger to Him, has lost the Life of God in itself, whenever its Love does not thus begin and end in God.

The Loss of this Love was the *Fall* of Man, as it opened in him a Kingdom of *Self*, in which Satan, the World, and the Flesh, could all of them bring forth their own Works. If therefore Man is to rise from his Fall, and return to his Life in God, there is an absolute Necessity that *Self*, with all his Brood of gross Affections, be deposed, that his first Love, in and for which he was created, may be born again in him. Christ came into the World to *save Sinners*, to destroy the Works of the Devil. Now *Self* is not only the Seat and Habitation, but the very *Life* of Sin. The Works of the Devil are all wrought in *Self*, it is his peculiar *Workhouse*, and therefore Christ is not come as a Saviour from Sin, as a Destroyer of the Works of the Devil in any of us, but *so far* as *Self* is beaten down, and overcome in us. If it is literally true what our Lord said, *That his Kingdom was not of this World*, then it is a Truth of the same Certainty, that no one is a Member of this Kingdom, but he that, in the literal Sense of the Words, renounces the Spirit of this World. Christians might as well part with Half the Articles of their Creed, or
but

but Half believe them, as to really refuse, or but by Halves enter into these Self-denials.

For all that is in the *Creed*, is only to bring forth this Dying and Death to all, and every Part of the old Man, that the Life and Spirit of Christ may be formed in us.

Our Redemption is *this new Birth*; if this is not done, or doing in us, we are still unredeemed. And though the Saviour of the World is come, He is not come in us, He is not received by us, is a Stranger to us, is not ours, if his Life is not within us. His Life is not, cannot be within us, but so far as the Spirit of the World, Self-love, Self-esteem, and Self-seeking are renounced, and driven out of us.

Thirdly, Hence we may also learn the true Nature and Worth of all *Self-denials* and *Mortifications*. As to their Nature, considered in themselves, they have nothing of *Goodness* or *Holiness*, nor are any real Parts of our Sanctification, they are not the true *Food* or *Nourishment* of the divine Life in our Souls, they have no *Quickening*, *Sanctifying Power* in them; their only Worth consists in this, that they remove the Impediments of Holiness, break down that which stands between God and us, and make Way for the *Quickening*, *Sanctifying* Spirit of God to operate on our Souls. Which Operation of God is the *one only* Thing that can raise the divine Life in the Soul, or help it to the smallest Degree of real Holiness, or spiritual Life. As in our Creation, we had only that *Degree* of a divine Life, which the Power of God derived into us; as then

all that we had, and were, was the *sole Operation* of God in the Creation of us, so in our Redemption, or regaining that first Perfection, which we have lost, all must be again the Operation of God, *every Degree* of the divine Life restored in us, be it ever so small, must and can be nothing else but so much of the Life and Operation of God found again in the Soul. All the Activity of Man in the Works of Self-denial, has no Good in itself, but is only to open an Entrance for the *one only* Good, the Light of God, to operate upon us.

Hence also we may learn the Reason, why many People not only lose the Benefit, but are even the worse for all their Mortifications. It is because they mistake the whole Nature and Worth of them. They practise them for their *own Sakes*, as Things good in themselves, they think them to be *real* Parts of Holiness, and so *rest* in them, and look no *farther*, but grow full of Self-esteem, and Self-admiration for their own Progress in them. This makes them Self-sufficient, morose, severe Judges of all those that fall short of their Mortifications.

And thus their *Self-denials* do only *that* for them, which *Indulgences* do for other People; they withstand and hinder the Operation of God upon their Souls, and instead of being *really* Self-denials, they strengthen and keep up the Kingdom of *Self*.

There is no avoiding this fatal Error, but by deeply entering into this great Truth, that all our own Activity and Working has no Good in it,
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can do no Good to us, but as it leads and turns us in the best Manner to the Light and Spirit of God, which alone brings Life and Salvation into the Soul. *Stretch forth thy Hand*, said our Lord to the Man, *that had a withered Hand*; he did so, and *it was immediately made whole as the other*.

Now, had this Man any Ground for Pride, or a high Opinion of himself, for the Share he had in the Restoring of his Hand? Yet just such is our Share in the raising up of the spiritual Life within us. All that we can do by our own Activity, is only like this Man's stretching out his Hand; the rest is the Work of Christ, the only Giver of Life to the withered Hand, or the dead Soul. We can only then do living Works, when we are so far born again, as to be able to say with the Apostle, *Yet not I, but Christ that liveth in me*. But to return, and further shew how the Soul that feels the Call of God to Repentance, is to behave under it, that this stirring of the divine Power in the Soul, may have its full Effect, and bring forth the Birth of the new Man in Christ Jesus. We are to consider it (as in Truth it is) as the *Seed* of the divine Nature within us, that can only grow by its *own Strength*, and *Union* with God. It is a divine Life, and therefore can grow from nothing but divine Power. When the Virgin *Mary* conceived the Birth of the holy Jesus, all that she did towards it herself, was only this single Act of Faith and Resignation to God: *Behold the Handmaid of the Lord, be it unto me according to thy Word*. This is all that we can do towards the Conception of that
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new Man that is to be born in ourselves. Now this Truth is easily consented to, and a Man thinks he believes it, because he consents to it, or rather, does not deny it. But this is not enough, it is to be apprehended in a deep, full, and practical Assurance, in such a Manner as a Man knows and believes that he did not create the *Stars*, or cause Life to rise up in himself. And then it is a Belief that puts the Soul into a right State, that makes Room for the Operation of God upon it. His Light then enters with full Power into the Soul, and his holy Spirit moves and directs all that is done in it, and so Man lives again in God as a new Creature. For this Truth thus firmly believed, will have these two most excellent Effects: *First*, it will keep the Soul fixed, and continually turned towards God, in Faith, Prayer, Desire, Confidence, and Resignation to Him, for all that it wants to have done in it, and to it; which will be a continual Source of all divine Virtues and Graces. The Soul thus turned to God, must be always receiving from Him. It stands at the true Door of all divine Communications, and the Light of God as freely enters into it, as the Light of the *Sun* enters into the *Air*. *Secondly*, It will fix and ground the Soul in a true and lasting Self-denial. For by thus knowing, and owning our own *Nothingness* and Inability, that we have no other Capacity for Good, but that of receiving it from God alone, *Self* is wholly denied, its Kingdom is destroyed; no Room is left for spiritual Pride and Self-esteem;

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we are saved from a Pharisaical Holiness, from wrong Opinions of our own Works and good Deeds, and from a Multitude of Errors, the most dangerous to our Souls, all which arise from the *Something* that we take ourselves to be either in Nature or Grace. But when we once apprehend but in some Degree the *All* of God, and the *Nothingness* of ourselves, we have got a Truth, whose Usefulness and Benefit, no Words can express. It brings a Kind of Infallibility into the Soul, in which it dwells; all that is vain, and false, and deceitful, is forced to vanish and fly before it. When our Religion is founded on this Rock, it has the Firmness of a Rock, and its Height reaches unto Heaven. The World, the Flesh and the Devil can do no Hurt to it; all Enemies are known, and all disarmed by this great Truth, dwelling in our Souls. It is the Knowledge of the *All* of God, that makes *Cberubims* and *Seraphims* to be Flames of divine Love. For where this *All* of God is truly known and felt in any Creature, there its whole Breath and Spirit is a Fire of Love, nothing but a pure, disinterested Love can rise up in it, or come from it, a Love that begins and ends in God. And where this Love is born in any Creature, there a Seraphick Life is born along with it. For this pure Love introduces the Creature into the *All* of God, all that is in God, is opened in the Creature; it is united with God, and hath the Life of God manifested in it.

There is but *one Salvation* for all Mankind, and that is the *Life* of God in the Soul. God
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has but *one Design* or Intent towards all Mankind, and that is to *introduce* or *generate* his own Life, Light, and Spirit in them, that all may be as so many Images, Temples, and Habitations of the Holy Trinity. This is God's good Will to all *Christians, Jews, and Heathens*. They are all *equally* the Desire of his Heart, his Light continually *waits* for an Entrance into *all* of them, his *Wisdom crieth, she putteth forth her Voice*, not here, or there, but every where, in all the Streets of all the Parts of the World.

Now there is but *one possible* Way for Man to attain this Salvation, or Life of God in the Soul. There is not one for the *Jew*, another for a *Christian*, and a Third for the *Heathen*. No; God is one, human Nature is one, Salvation is one, and the *Way* to it is one; and that is, *the Desire of the Soul turned to God*. When this *Desire* is alive, and breaks forth in any Creature under Heaven, then the *lost Sheep* is found, and the *Shepherd* hath it upon his Shoulders. Through *this Desire* the Poor *prodigal Son* leaveth his *Husks* and *Swine*, and hasteth to his Father; 'tis because of *this Desire*, that the Father seeth the Son while yet *afar off*, that he runs out to meet him, falleth on his Neck, and kisseth him. See here how plainly we are taught, that no sooner is this *Desire arisen*, and in *Motion* towards God, but the *Operation* of God's Spirit answers to it, cherishes and welcomes its *first Beginnings*, signified by the Father's seeing, and having Compassion on his Son, whilst yet *afar off*, that is, in the first Beginnings of his *Desire*. Thus does *this Desire*
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do all, it brings the Soul to God, and God into the Soul, it unites with God, it co-operates with God, and is one Life with God. Suppose this *Desire* not to be alive, not in Motion either in a *Jew* or a *Christian*, and then all the Sacrifices, the Service, the Worship either of the *Law* or the *Gospel*, are but *dead Works*, that bring *no Life* into the Soul, nor beget any *Union* between God and it. Suppose this Desire to be awakened, and fixed upon God, though in Souls that never heard either of the *Law* or *Gospel*, and then the divine Life, or Operation of God enters into them, and the new Birth in Christ is formed in those, that never heard of his Name. And these are they *that shall come from the East, and from the West, and sit down with Abraham and Isaac in the Kingdom of God.*

Oh my God, just and good, how great is thy Love and Mercy to Mankind, that Heaven is thus every where open, and Christ thus the *common* Saviour to all that turn the Desire of their Hearts to Thee! Oh sweet Power of the *Bruiser* of the Serpent, born in every Son of Man, that stirs and works in every Man, and gives every Man a Power, and Desire, to find his Happiness in God! O holy Jesus, heavenly *Light*, that *lighteth every Man that cometh into the World*, that redeemeth every Soul that followeth thy Light, which is *always within Him*! O holy Trinity, immense Ocean of divine Love, in which all Mankind live, and move, and have their Being? None are separated from Thee, none live out of thy Love, but all are embraced in the Arms of thy

thy Mercy, all are Partakers of thy divine Life, the Operation of thy holy Spirit, as soon as their Heart is turned to Thee! Oh plain, and easy, and simple Way of Salvation, wanting no Subtleties of Art or Science, no borrowed Learning, no Refinements of Reason, but all done by the simple natural Motion of every Heart, that truly longs after God. For no sooner is the finite Desire of the Creature in Motion towards God, but the infinite Desire of God is united with it, co-operates with it. And in this united Desire of God, and the Creature, is the Salvation and Life of the Soul brought forth. For the Soul is shut out of God, and imprisoned in its own dark Workings of Flesh and Blood, merely and solely because it desires to live to the Vanity of this World. This *Desire* is its Darkness, its Death, its Imprisonment, and Separation from God.

When therefore the *first Spark* of a Desire after God arises in thy Soul, cherish it with all thy Care, give all thy Heart into it, it is nothing less than a Touch of the divine *Loadstone*, that is to draw Thee out of the Vanity of Time, into the Riches of Eternity. Get up therefore and follow it as gladly, as the *Wise-men of the East* followed the *Star* from Heaven that appeared to them. It will do for Thee as the Star did for them; it will lead Thee to the Birth of Jesus, not in a Stable at *Bethlehem*, in *Judea*, but to the Birth of Jesus, in the *dark Center* of thy own fallen Soul.

I shall conclude this *first Part*, with the Words of the heavenly illuminated, and blessed *Jacob Behmen*.

' It is much to be lamented, that we are so
 ' blindly led, and the Truth withheld from us
 ' through imaginary Conceptions ; for if the *di-*
 ' *vine Power* in the inward Ground of the Soul,
 ' was manifest, and working with its Lustre in
 ' us, then is the whole tri-une God present in
 ' the *Life* and *Will* of the Soul ; and the Hea-
 ' ven, wherein God dwelleth, is opened in the
 ' Soul, and *There*, in the Soul, is the *Place*
 ' where the Father begetteth his Son, and where
 ' the Holy Ghost proceedeth from the Father
 ' and the Son.

' Christ saith, *I am the Light of the World, he*
 ' *that followeth me, walketh not in Darknefs.* He
 ' directs us only to Himself. He is the Morn-
 ' ing Star, and is generated and riseth in us, and
 ' shineth in the Darknefs of our Nature. O how
 ' great a Triumph is there in the Soul, when He
 ' ariseth in it, then a Man knows, as he never
 ' knew before, that he is a Stranger in a foreign
 ' Land.'

F I N I S.

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...to be lamented, that we are
...and the Truth withheld from us
...Conceptions; for in the
...the inward Ground of the Soul,
...and working with its Light in
...the whole of the Soul; and the
...is opened in the
...the Place
...the Father begotten his Son, and who
...the Holy Ghost, proceeded from the Father
...and the Son.

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...is the Father, His
...is the Son, and
...is the Holy Ghost, who
...in the Soul, which is
...is known as the Father
...is a stranger in a
...land.

T W 1